

# Development Challenges in Odisha: Role of Media in Public Policy

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## What are the Development challenges in Odisha?

Odisha is among the poorest of India's major states, despite its rich endowment of natural resources, and coastline. There have been positive developments in recent years, and poverty rates in Odisha have declined from 47% to 39.9% between 1999-00 and 2004-05.<sup>1</sup> Despite this improvement, poverty rates in Odisha remain almost twice as high as rates in the rest of India. Non-monetary indicators of poverty too confirm the low welfare status of Odia households. For instance, infant mortality rates are 65 per 1,000 live births relative to 57 per 1,000 live births for India.<sup>2</sup> Maternal mortality rate, malnourishment is exceptionally high. Despite having 11 per cent of country's water resources, millions of people in Odisha face severe water shortage both for drinking and irrigation. Sanitation scenario is appalling. Only 8% of the rural households in Odisha use toilets as compared to over 80% of rural populace in Kerala.

Eighty seven per cent of Odisha's 37 million population is rural, and a vast majority of the poor live in rural areas.<sup>3</sup> There are substantial regional variations in the extent of rural poverty in Odisha. Across the three regions of the state, poverty rates vary from 87% in the Southern interior region to 50% in the Northern interior region to 32% in the Coastal region. On account

of the very high population density in the Coastal region, however, the absolute number of rural poor is roughly equally distributed across all three regions of the state. Odisha lags behind the national average in almost all development indicators.

This high rate of poverty in India, particularly in Odisha can be attributed to :

- High level of dependence on primitive methods of agriculture. About 75 per cent of Indian population depends on agriculture whereas the contribution of agriculture to the GDP is 22 per cent. While services and industry have grown at double digit figures, agriculture growth rate has been less than 4 per cent.
- Unequal distribution of resources
- High difference in literacy rate. Although the overall literacy rate at 73.45 is close to the national average, there is high difference between districts. While the literacy rate in Khurda is 87.51 that of Nabarangpur is 48.2.
- Unemployment and under-employment. 60% of our labour force generates 18% of our GDP. Agriculture (as we know it today) condemns many Indian farmers to poverty because of low productivity. One lac of India's 6 lac villages have less than 200 people. Job creation clusters and soft and

hard infrastructure need size. New cities need to be engines of poverty reduction.<sup>4</sup>

- Environmental degradation.
- High population growth rate in many states, mostly North Indian states.
- High level of inequality arising from rural-urban divide

### **Fall out of continuation of poverty and hunger**

Besides the human tragedy, one of the ramifications of poverty is a nation with weak and underproductive manpower leading to further poverty and thus continuation of a vicious circle. Poverty coupled with inequality in a society gives rise to social tension leading to class conflicts, which might tear apart the social fabric and bring about anarchy. The Maoist upsurge in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and several other states in India is the glaring example. “The extremist political resistance has gained ground at least in one fourth of the landmass at the very heart of the country.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Can Public Policy effect some change?**

The answer is both yes and no.

Yes, if the policies are pro-people with a long term vision; and if the policies are properly implemented. Mal-implemented policies can be counterproductive.

No, if the policies are wrong. There is a cause for worry as public policy-making in India has frequently been characterized by a failure to anticipate needs, impacts, or reactions which could have reasonably been foreseen, thus impeding economic development. Policies have been reversed or changed more frequently than warranted by exogenous changes or new information. O.P. Agarwal and T.V. Somanathan have written a brilliant paper ‘Public Policy Making In India: Issues and Remedies’ in which discusses why India’s policymaking structures

have so much difficulty in formulating the “right” policy and then sticking to it. It goes on to ask, and make a modest beginning in answering, the question of what can be done to improve the structures and systems involved in the making of public policy in India. One of the suggestions that they have suggested is more engagement with the media and civil society at the policy formulation level. That brings us to the following question:

### **Why should media be concerned about Development Issues?**

Before answering that one question: can media do something about it? We must note here that there are at least 3 major media traditions in modern India:

- Diverse, pluralistic and relatively independent press
- State-controlled media like AIR, Doordarshan.
- Media outfits of various subaltern groups and their organizations

Despite the wide diversity, in the present Indian context, media does play an important role in the exertion of power and distribution of values. Media affects the overall quality of public life and also shapes people’s engagement in the specific policy decisions in the Indian democracy. Now onto the question: why should media be concerned about poverty, or hunger, or displacement, unemployment, health, sanitation and issues like that ? There are basically three reasons:

- Media owes its status and power to its altruistic, do-gooder role
- As a product of the society media has a responsibility towards it
- As a business venture it has a stake in making people capable enough to contribute to the media business

Media enjoys credibility, built over years of faith and trust as it is perceived to be truthful, unbiased, knowledgeable, having basic humane values, having a moral universe and having social responsibility. In fact these perceptions are the fountainhead of the power of media. Media has to be altruistic in order to retain its power. People want to escape poverty. So poverty is a call to action - a call to change so that many more may have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities. Media as the fourth estate must share the responsibility to help eradicate poverty.

Media has a responsibility towards the society as a product of the society. We don't help someone or something because we were the reasons why they got in trouble in the first place. We act because we can. For example, if we see someone who is drowning, we don't just let them suffer or die because we're not the ones who pushed them in the water. We act because we can, and because someone may die if we don't. Reducing poverty helps build stronger communities, more stable governments and improves the region's economics. For example, if developing countries gained even just 1% more of the value of world trade, it would lift 128 million people out of poverty. It would also provide economic growth for developed countries as new markets opened up to our own producers.

Media is also a business. Therefore like all honest businesses it has a stake in removing poverty. Improvements in the living standards and income of people would have significant economic benefits for everyone, including media business.

### **Status of development reporting**

Now that we know why media should be concerned, the question remains: is media concerned. It will be pertinent to quote what one of our most respected journalist B.G.Verghe

wrote, "In the competition for circulation/ratings and a larger share in the consumer rupee through advertising there has been a dumbing down of serious reportage and analysis, a trivialisation of news and events, sensationalism and prurient coverage, invasion of privacy, trial by press, resort to rumour, gossip and innuendo without verification, and disregard for fair and balanced reporting or prompt correction when in error and the right of reply".<sup>6</sup>

A recent content analysis of three mainstream Odia newspapers shows that development news finds just about 2 to 3 per cent of the total editorial space. Does development news get prominence in mainstream Odia newspapers? The content analysis shows that just 0.4 to 1.57 per cent space in front pages of three largest circulated newspapers were occupied by development news. Were the development issues discussed in the editorial pages? Yes, but the space occupied just 0.47 to 1.45 per cent of the space.<sup>7</sup>

The trend is similar in newspapers of other languages, and other media like television. Increasingly more space and time is devoted to trivia, to non-issues. For example, the Lakme India Fashion Week 2008 edition produced, in one count, some 4,00,000 words in print. Over 1,000 minutes in television coverage. Some 800 hours of TV and video footage were shot. Close to 10,000 rolls of film exposed. Consider that this was the main media event in a country where less than 0.2 per cent of people sport designer clothes, where per capita consumption of textiles in 2002 at 19 meters, was way below the world average.

In its eagerness to cover non-issues, media is not focusing on real pressing issues. When hundreds of journalists and photographers were covering Lakme India Fashion Show or similar 'show's, scores of farmers were committing suicide in various places in the countryside. It did

not get the kind of coverage, it deserved. Growing hunger amongst the poorer sections in India should have been a matter of urgent concern anywhere in the world. With well over 300 million hungry people, India alone has more undernourished human beings than all of sub-Saharan Africa combined. But this does not seem a matter of grave concern within the media. There are a number of pressing issues that concern millions of people, like non availability of basic services- health, education, roads, which are not addressed by media. Non availability of drinking water in many parts of the country is a major issue. So is displacement. So is labour migration. The list is endless. Inequality between the rich and poor is growing. In fact it has grown more in the last 5-10 years than it had in the last 50 years after independence. Social tension is on the rise. So is violence. But mainstream media seems not to be bothered. There seems to be a disconnect with the ground reality. P. Sainath writes in anguish, "But how do we address problems whose existence we barely acknowledged in the first place? So forget about the agrarian crisis, and the 1,82,000 farm suicides associated with it over the past decade. And when was hunger and joblessness an issue (in the media), any way? Most publications have given zero space to India's dismal show in the global Hunger Index."<sup>8</sup>

### Causes of the disconnect

Now onto the causes. There are two sets of causes really, one from the media angle, one from the media-users angle. First from the media angle:

- (i) After 60 plus years of independence, the missionary zeal of pre-independence media has lost its steam. Media is a business now, infotainment business with a bit of social responsibility thrown in. Since it is business it has to cater to the want and need of its consumers; more to want than to need.

Hence it gradually aims at lowest common denominator. Entire approach changes. Serious issues are gradually pushed out. The 'dumbing down' process is in place.

- (ii) Advertisement is becoming more important. With media becoming more capital intensive, and the product selling at less than the production cost, advertisement revenue is becoming more crucial for survival. The stake is becoming higher. Gradually what media needs is not readers or viewers; they need consumers for the products advertised. This role reversal determines the content. Media no longer needs people who would think, they require zombies, who would only consume.
- (iii) The media have, as P. Sainath puts it, "lost their compass, and with it, their compassion. What Prabhat Pattnaik, one of our foremost economists, calls, 'the moral universe' of the media has changed a lot for the worse. All their technical advances can not hide this. Indian journals of the freedom struggle had differing perspectives, angry debates. There was richness and variety. Today you have Mcmedia. It tastes the same everywhere."<sup>9</sup> There has been, as P. Sainath puts it, 'a recession of the intellect' in the media.<sup>10</sup>

From the media-users angle:

- (i) The most cogent explanation for why journalism in the public interest has lost leverage was offered by Polk Laffoon IV, the corporate spokesman of Knight Ridder. "I wish there were an identifiable and strong correlation between quality journalism ... and newspaper sales," he said. "It isn't ... that simple."<sup>11</sup> Why does it happen? We, the media users seek entertainment in all forms, shapes and sizes and information that we can use for our personal gain.

- (ii) Serious issues bore us. We do not want to delve deep into the issue. It is easy not to be involved. We want light reading material, pretty picture to ogle at. And then get on with our mundane life.
- (iii) We need idols. And we now want them well dressed and well heeled. We need idols like instant coffee. Page3 personalities with their shallow but colourful persona fulfil this need.

### But, what is the problem?

Many ask: what is the problem if media is bypassing serious, basic issues? That is what people want. And what is the problem *yaar*? Apparently there is none. But look closely. The process is changing the way we look at core issues. Serious issues. There is less space for serious issues and even lesser for its analysis. Media is supposed to set agenda, and in this way a totally skewed agenda is being set. As B.G. Verghese says, “Serious journalism must remain part of the democratic dharma. A true democracy is inseparable from an informed people exposed to diverse views and ideas.” Gradual trivialisation denies people this exposure. It is a threat to healthy democracy.

There is something more serious than this. This trivialisation process is eating into the vitals of healthy socialization process. Further it is stunting the humanizing process and triggering a sinister dehumanising process. It is promoting ‘I ...me’ culture. It is promoting a shallow, ‘all body - no soul’ kind of existence. It is a negation of what human civilization stands for. And we don’t seem to understand. There lies the big problem. As Prasannarajan writes in India Today, “The legitimisation of trivia as a cause only magnifies the pornography of protest, not the debatable bad taste of the act itself. It is a pretence born out of paranoia.”<sup>12</sup>

Consider what P. Sainath says. “If we were to look back at Indian journalism of the last 15 years—how relevant would it be? There were huge technological advances. Major gains in reach and technique. But how did the media connect with, say, the giant processes gripping the Indian countryside? Did it achieve greatness? Even goodness? Perhaps its mediocrity was too pronounced for it to gain even notoriety. (Though a few did manage that.)”

### Is there a solution?

Yes there is. It lies in two levels: at the media consumers’ and at the media content producers’. Both media consumers and content producers can and ought to play their role to help mitigate poverty. However, I shall concentrate only on the role media can and should play.

### What roles media can play?

Media can play five roles. There can be considerable overlapping in the roles.

- Media as a Watchdog: It is said that sunshine is the best disinfectant. That somebody is watching me- is the best deterrent to lot of social maladies like corruption.
- Media as an Enabler: Media increases people’s access to information. Information brings them power and to some extent prosperity. If we take a look at the media consumption and development matrix of Kerala and Bihar or Odisha, we shall find that there is a clear relation between access and use of media and development.
- Media as a Public sphere: People can air and share their ideas through mass media. Issues can be discussed. Suggestions for solutions of problems can be aired and discussed. For example media can help discuss the suggestions M S Swaminathan offered to mitigate hunger and ensuring food security in the ‘Food Security Atlas’.<sup>13</sup> Socially

responsible journalism is a struggle to gain public space within the private sphere.

- Media as an Informer: Media can inform people about various problems of society, and what causes them, and what is being done or not done about them. This helps fix accountability.
- Media as a Platform: Media can provide a platform, where people can air their grievances, put forth their views, and participate in governance.

### Conclusion

“At the end of the day, the media remains a public trust, which alone justifies its characterisation as the Fourth Estate. Its prime asset is credibility. The maintenance of professional standards of fairness, balance and public interest is critical to its place in society.” Forget this, and media will lose its credibility, and for media, especially news media credibility is the fountainhead of its power. One word for the content creators in media: development is not a ‘dry’ and ‘boring’ area. It can be made interesting reading/viewing. It is possible to present the stories in a way to shake people out of their stupor, to stir their collective conscience. All it takes is skill and application.

It is possible to meet the development challenges. We can, collectively and individually, participate in making that change happen.

### Footnotes :

1. <http://planningcommission.nic.in/news/prmar07.pdf> Poverty estimates based on a uniform recall period suggest that poverty rates have fallen from 36% in 1993-94 to 27.5 in 2004.
2. National Family Health Surveys (2005-06) Fact Sheet – Odisha.
3. Odisha has one of the lowest population densities among Indian states.
4. India Labour Report, 2008

5. Medha Patkar and Amit Bhaduri, The State and its Stepchildren, Tehelka, April 11, 2009, p-44
6. Verghese, B.G. in an article titled, “Newspapers as a Public Trust”, published in The Hindu, 29th January, 2006. B.G.Verghese is a columnist and a Ramon Magsaysay Award winner. He is currently Visiting Professor at the Centre for Political Research, NewDelhi.
7. The content analysis was done by the students of Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Dhenkanal between August and October, 2008. The newspapers taken for analysis were Sambad, Dharitri and Samaj.
8. P. Sainath in an edit page article : ‘A recession of Intellect’ published in the Hindu, April 20, 2009.
9. Excerpted from P. Sainath’s book, The Indian Media: Illusion, Delusion and Reality’, a collection of essays in honour of Prem Bhatia, Rupa and Co, New Delhi, January 2006.
10. P. Sainath in an edit page article : ‘A recession of Intellect’ published in the Hindu, April20, 2009.
11. State of the News Media 2006 report presented by the Project for Excellence in Journalism, a research institute affiliated with the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts. Details at [www.newswatch.com](http://www.newswatch.com).
12. S. Prasannarajan, India Today/The Kiss of Death/ May 14, 2007. Vol. XXXII Number 19. Page 32.
13. The Atlas concludes with a “Sustainable Food Security Compact,” a nine-point action plan for every State and Union Territory. The action points refer to stabilizing population, conserving and enhancing land resources, ensuring water security, conserving and restoring forests with community participation, strengthening biodiversity, improving the atmosphere, managing common property resources, intensifying crop and animal production in a sustainable way, and forming a Coalition for Sustainable Food Security in every State. Details in : <http://www.mssrf.org/fs/atlas/atlas.htm>

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# Ethics and Social Media

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The last two decades have witnessed a rapid transformation of traditional media into new media that encompasses digital, computerized, and networked information and communication technologies. This shift has raised concerns and discussions around the positive and negative implications of the new media, and other issues such as: control of information, volume and speed of communication. Social networking sites, video-sharing sites, wikis, blogs, among many others, have evolved as a result of web concepts and new media technologies. Millions of people around the globe, through social networking like internal, external, or mobile are recently building online local, regional, and global communities to communicate their shared interests and activities, disseminate information, and interact through a variety of web-based tools. The use of new media and social networks (e.g. Myspace, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter,) has implications for society, culture, and politics that has encouraged researchers to investigate a variety of related issues such as: social identity, privacy, distance learning, social capital, sociopsychological effects of the web, misuse of cyberspace, diaspora, social status, and access to information.

## 2. ETHICS, DISCLOSURE AND THE MORALITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Social media unlike traditional media are usually interactive in nature, so users can comment on and edit published material, making it difficult to control content. Social media blurs private/public boundaries when personal information and opinions enter the public domain. The boundaries between personal and work life also become blurred as companies make use of social media, designed primarily for personal use, for business purposes, and likewise employees access personal sites while at work.

There has been a transformation in communication because of social media. Here are some changes that have occurred in the process of the flow of information.

- People have now become both the producer and consumer of information.
- News can be shared instantly online before it even reaches the television.
- The judgment of communication is both positively and negatively affected.
  - It is up to the reader to decide whether or not the information is true and credible. The reader must carefully look at the context, channel, and author of the information.

- Because more people communicate online, the value of face-to-face communication is lost. This has multiple effects on the way a message is received and interpreted.
- People have the scope to filter out and choose the types of messages they need and those they do not.

### 3. CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL CONCERNS ABOUT SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES

While the social and natural sciences focus on the impact of Social Networking Services(SNS) on psychosocial markers of happiness/well-being, psychosocial adjustment, social capital, or feelings of life satisfaction, philosophical concerns about social networking and ethics have generally centered on topics less amenable to empirical measurement, e.g., privacy, identity, friendship, the good life and democratic freedom. More so than ‘social capital’ or feelings of ‘life satisfaction,’ these topics are closely tied to traditional concerns of ethical theory, e.g., virtues, rights, duties, motivations and consequences.

#### 3.1 SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES AND PRIVACY

Technologies of social networking have added a new sense of urgency and new layers of complexity. Some fundamental practices of concern include: the potential availability of users’ data to third parties for commercial, surveillance or data mining purposes; the capacity of facial-recognition software to automatically identify persons in uploaded photos; the ability of third-party applications to collect and publish user data without their permission or awareness; the frequent use by SNS of automatic ‘opt-in’ privacy controls; the use of ‘cookies’ to track online user activities after they have left a SNS; the potential use of location-based social networking for stalking or other illicit monitoring of users’ physical movements; the sharing of user information or

patterns of activity with government entities; and, last but not least, the potential of SNS to encourage users to adopt voluntary but imprudent, ill-informed or unethical information sharing practices, either with respect to sharing their own personal data or sharing data related to other persons and entities.

#### 3.2. THE ETHICS OF IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES

Technologies social networking open up a new type of ethical space in which personal identities and communities, both ‘real’ and virtual, are constructed, presented, negotiated, managed and performed. SNS such as Facebook can also be viewed as enabling authenticity in important ways. While the ‘Timeline’ feature displaying my entire online personal history can prompt me to ‘edit’ my past, it can also prompt me to face up to and assimilate into my thoughts and actions that might otherwise be conveniently forgotten.

#### 3.3. FRIENDSHIP, VIRTUE AND THE GOOD LIFE ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES

SNS can facilitate many types of relational connections: LinkedIn encourages social relations organized around our professional lives, Twitter is useful for creating lines of communication between ordinary individuals and figures of public interest, MySpace was for a time a popular way for musicians to promote themselves and communicate with their fans, and Facebook, which began as a way to link university cohorts and now connects people across the globe, has recently seen a surge in business profiles aimed at establishing links to existing and future customers. These sorts of questions about how online friendships measure up to offline ones, along with questions about whether or to what extent online friendships encroach upon users’ commitments to embodied, ‘real-world’ relations with friends, family members and communities, defined the ethical problem-space of online friendship as SNS began to emerge.



### 3.4 DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

As is the case with privacy, identity, community and friendship on SNS, ethical debates on the impact of SNS on civil discourse, freedom and democracy in the public sphere must be seen as extensions of a broader discussion about the political implications of the Internet. A related topic of concern is the potential of the Internet to fragment the public sphere by encouraging the formation of a plurality of ‘echo chambers,’ informational silos for like-minded individuals who deliberately shield themselves from exposure to alternative views. The worry is that such insularity will promote extremism and the reinforcement of ill-founded opinions, while also preventing citizens of a democracy from recognizing their shared interests and experiences. Finally, there is the question of the extent to which SNS can facilitate political activism, civil disobedience and popular revolutions resulting in the overthrow of authoritarian regimes.

### 3.5 SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES AND CYBERCRIME

SNS have been targeted, especially in mass media, as potential hosts for a broad spectrum of ‘cybercrimes,’ including but not limited to: cyberbullying, cyberstalking, child exploitation, illegal surveillance, identity theft, intellectual property and copyright violations. Cybercrime is an enduring topic of philosophical interest for the broader field of computer ethics, and the migration to and evolution of such crime on SNS platforms may raise new and distinctive ethical issues in the coming decades.

## 4. SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES AND METAETHICAL ISSUES

A host of meta-ethical questions are raised by the rapid emergence of SNS as a dominant medium of interpersonal connection.

SNS and other emerging information technologies do not reliably confine themselves to national or cultural boundaries, and this creates a particular challenge for applied ethicists. For example, SNS practices in different countries must be analyzed against a conceptual background that recognizes and accommodates complex differences in moral norms and practices concerning, for example, privacy. Other SNS phenomena that one might expect to benefit from intercultural analysis and that are relevant to the ethical considerations include: varied cultural patterns and preference/tolerance for affective display, argument and debate, personal exposure, expressions of political, interfamilial or cultural criticism, religious expression and sharing of intellectual property. Alternatively, the very possibility of a coherent information ethics may juxtapose challenge, for example, from a constructivist view that emerging socio-technological practices like SNS continually *redefine* ethical norms—such that our analyses of SNS and related technologies are not only ceased to operate from shifting ground, but from ground that is being shifted *by* the intended object of our ethical adjudgement.

There are, thus, pressing practical concerns about whether and how philosophers can actually have an impact on the ethical profile of emerging technologies such as SNS. If philosophers direct their ethical analyses only to other philosophers, then it is likely such analyses will function simply as ethical postmortems of human-technology relations, with no opportunity to actually pre-empt, reform or redirect unethical technological practices.

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# Ethics and Media

## Reasonable Restrictions on reporting matter subjudiced in Electronic Media

*N.K. Behera*

A successful democratic country rests over four pillars democracy and the press or media is known as the fourth pillar. Ordinarily the freedom of press means and includes the right to print and publish without interference of the state or any public authority except such interference is authorized by the Constitution.

Primarily the freedom of press originated in England. In the exposition of famous statement of MELTON “give me the liberty to know, to utter and to argue freely according to conscience above all authorities.” It was a remark in 1662. The ambit of reasonable expectation in publishing matters subjudiced requires thought, conscience, legal approach, reformatory idea peeping into the deeper requirements of freedom and individual freedom of speech and expression. The prevailing profile cases like in voltage manner such as 2G cases of Telecom Deptt., Coalgate scam, Mining Scam and other highlighted corruption cases coupled with Criminal cases like Arushi murder case, Haryana Gang Rape Case, Bank Scams and other cases are burning issues in the present society. Electronic media, especially the T.V. Channels are requiring reasonable restrictions in their live telecast.

Art.19(2) of our Constitution empowers the state to impose by law reasonably restriction on the right conferred by the Constitution in the

above cited circumstances, it is well known that any right under the Constitution is limited to citizens and also cannot be claimed by non-citizen – the above observation made by the Hon’ble Supreme Court in AIR 1959 SC 395, 402, in **Sharma vs. Srikrishna**. It is here to say that restrictions would become unreasonable if it imposes a permanent ban on entry of each such newspaper. Similarly if it empowers administrative authority to impose ban without giving the person to be affected an opportunity of being-heard, then also it is unreasonable. Moreover the restriction to be valid must relate considerations mentioned as observed by Hon’ble Supreme Court in AIR 1958 SC 89 **Virendra vs. State of Punjab**. Again the discussion of reasonable expectation of the media come up before the Apex Court in AIR 1973 SC 106 **Bennett Coleman vs. Union of India** and also explained in AIR 1960 SC 633 Superintendent of Central **Prison vs. Rama Mohan Lohia**.

### ARTICLE – 14

Article 14 of the Constitution of India provides – “The State shall not deny to any person of laws within the territory of India. It implies that an individual citizen, Govt. press or any organization enjoys equal fundamental rights in the eyes of law and no one has a right to transgress the rights of the others and the state has to protect it.

## DAMAGES TO PEOPLE

Let us take an birds eye view in respect of a matter published and telecast live and its damages on people and society and above all the country at large. In this respect their lordship in **Manshi Ram vrs. Mela Ram**, AIR 1936, Lah 23, their Lordship quoted “what has been printed” may fall into many “heads”. Moreover a printed matters is generally the most permanent character and people are disposed to believe “what they generally see in print. Hence, where a libel is published in a newspaper the person defamed is entitled to substandard damages. The mere fact the proprietor of the paper had no knowledge of the publication of libel in his paper can not absolve him from civil liability.

Article 19(1) of the Indian Constitution declares that all citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression. Though freedom of press is not explicitly guaranteed as fundamental right it is no longer in doubt that it is implicit in the freedom of speech and expression which have been stated by Dr. Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly, and it has been pointed out in *Express Newspaper vrs. Union of India*, AIR 1958 SC 578 and in *Ramesh Thaper vrs. State of Madras*, AIR 1950 SC 124 (Para – 10).

## ELECTRONICS MEDIA / T.V. COVERAGE

Recently the Supreme Court in its land mark Judgment on August 30, 2012 while upholding Terrorist AJMAL KASAB hang for 26/11, attacks the Hon’ble Bench, was critical of the manner in which T.V. channels put their commercial interest and jeopardized national security by 24x7 live telecast of the operations that helped terrorists in planning and holding on to their hideouts.

The Supreme Court which is the Highest Court of our country in a stinging rebuke to the

electronic media said driven by commercial interests, T.V. Channels, Telecast operations against 10 terrorists during 26/11 attacks on Mumbai. The Bench held “The shots and visuals that were shown live by T.V. channels could have also been shown after all the terrorists were neutralized and the security operations were over. But in that case the T.V. programmes would not have had the same shrill, scintillating and chilling effects and would not have shot up the TRP ratings of the channel”, a bench of justices Aftab Alam and C.K. Prasad said –

“It must, therefore be held that by covering live terrorist attack on Mumbai in the way it was done, Indian T.V. channels were not serving any National interest or social cause. On the contrary, they were acting in their own commercial interest, putting National security in jeopardy, it said.

After upholding death penalty to the lone surviving Pakistani Terrorist Ajmal Kasab, the Bench said the manner in which TV channels competed with each other in showing gory details of the mayhem and operations of security forces greatly harmed their argument that there should be self-regulations and no external censorship.

The Apex Court said that the character and credibility of the institution were tested in the times of emergency. “The coverage of Mumbai Terrorist attacks by the Mainstream Electronics Media has done much harm to the argument that any regulatory mechanism for the media must from within”.

The Bench said it was not possible to find out whether the security forces actually suffered any casualties or injury on account of the way their operation were telecast alive”. But it is beyond doubt that the way the operations were freely shown not only exceeding difficult but also dangerous and risky” it said.

“The reckless coverage of terrorist attacks by channels thus gives rise to situation where on the one hand, the terrorists were completely hidden from the security forces and they had no means to know their exact position or even the kind of fire arms and explosives they possessed and on the other hand, the position of security forces; their weapons and their operation movements were being watched by the collaborators across the border on T.V. screens and being communicated to the terrorists” it said.

The court further found from the transcripts of conversation between terrorists hold up in Taj Hotel, Oberoi Hotel and Nariman House and their handlers in Pakistan that the terror master minds were watching the live telecast and got important inputs about the positioning of security forces.

The Bench further said that there were countless instances to show that the collaborators were watching practically every movement of security forces which were trying to tackle the terrorist under relentless gunfire and throwing of grenades. Apart from the transcripts, we can take judicial notice on the fact that terrorist attacks at all the places in goriest details, were shown live on Indian TV from beginning to the end almost non-stop. All these channels were competing with each other in showing the latest development on a minute-to-minute basis; including the position and movement of security forces engaged in flushing out the terrorists” the court said.

The Hon’ble Supreme Court said no amount of justification citing right to freedom of expression could be acceptable as the manner of coverage was totally wrong.

Freedom of expression, like other freedoms under Article 19 of the Constitution is subject to reasonable restrictions. An action

tending to violate another person's right to life guaranteed under Art.21 of the Constitution or putting national security in jeopardy can never be justified by taking the plea of freedom of speech and expression.

It is pertinent to mention here that 10 channels which are working are for paid coverage and to promote a particular political party’s cause and the worst in public debate in the T.V. Channels are of lower, un-experienced and vested interest persons participating and some are paid coverage. The crime files are not be coverage as it is done and mostly it could be called as a Media Trial when the matter in subjudiced before the Courts or under trial. It is critical as observed by good citizens of Odisha that if anything is live on the channels about public interest, then the T.V. channels invite un-experienced people for a discussion whose who have no profound knowledge in the said field or the subject discussed and only to pose for their personal coverage to achieve a Hippocratic public image and it is felt that they loose no time to appear before the coverage and it is needless to sum up here that they had a vested interest.

Lastly the Hon’ble Supreme Court in AIR 2007 SC 493 **Ajay Goswami vrs. Union of India** and others directed for amendments in Press Council Act, 1978 as follows:

“Mandamus for legislation against obscenity.

No guidelines can be issued by court to newspapers regarding matter which may not be suitable for reading of minors.

Sufficient safeguards in terms of various legislature norms, regulations to protect the society in general and children in particular from obscene and prurient contents are available under Press Council Act.

Justice A.R. Lakshmanan observed – “One of the most controversial issue is balancing the need to protect society against the potential harm that may flow from obscene material and the need to ensure respect for freedom of expression and preserve a free flow information and idea in AIR 1973 SC 1461. His Holiness **Keshabananda Bharati vrs. State of Kerala & others** – “The fundamental rights and directive principles constitute the conscience of our Constitution to have balanced – The dignity of individual can be achieved. Thus the existing position in the Press Council Act, 1978 must be amended in view of above rulings.

The Press Council Act, 1978 provides objects and functions of the council U/s.13, 14 & 15 and there is a Press Council (procedure and enquiry) Regulations 1979 two acts and Regulations amendment is essential or else the society and its citizens will bear irreparable loss and agony. There are ample powers conferred

by Article 32 read with Article 142 to make orders which have effect of law by virtue of Art.141 and there is mandate to all authorities to act in aid of the orders of this court as provided in 144 of the Constitution.

That why, “where there is inaction by legislature it is duty of executive to fill the vacuum and where there is inaction even by Executive for whatever reasons the judiciary must step in as directed by the Apex Court in AIR 1998 SC 889, **Vineet Narayan vrs. Union of India**.

There must be reasonable restrictions in TV coverage for public good and social cause.

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## Media in Democratic Governance and Social Development

*Santi Swarup Misra*

Twenty first century is the century of knowledge. In the present world order, modern democratic nations are undergoing a state of knowledge revolution where media play a vital role. Edmund Burke, the best British Parliamentarian, rightly highlighted media as the 'fourth estate of a democracy'. In a democratic state, elimination of social evils is the principal objective of a free and independent media. It contains public grievances and reflects public opinion.

Education is the key which unlocks the door of development and modernization. Media play an instrumental role in promoting education in society. It creates social consciousness in establishing a healthy social order. A democratic set up calls for informed citizenry in which media play a significant role in ensuring good governance through transparency and accountability in the system of governance.

Where media remain silent, a totalitarian state of order emerges and continues to exist as long as people in that state of order live with a state of uncertainty, mal-administration, and mis-governance and autocratic administration where citizens are denied to enjoy their freedom and liberty. To arrest the menace of this state of order, democracy is the ultimate solution. Democracy, is the form of government, in which sovereign

power rests in the hand of the people and is exercised by them either directly or indirectly through their representatives. Democracy is the surest guaranty against arbitrary rule, despotism, unbridled and autocratic power; it is most dependable assurance of justice and individual freedom.

Development is the legitimate expectation of the citizens in a democratic set up. It is also the responsibility of the state to promote development for the well-being of the people. Most particularly, it is the responsibility of the welfare state to ensure basic survival amenities to the people such as food, clothing, shelter, health care and primary education for ensuring a good civic life to the citizen.

The media can be considered a combination of content-music, films, T.V., radio, publishing advertisements and electronic games along with the associated technological devices. Media, in common parlance, have been divided into two types such as print and electronic.

Both play a vital role in a democratic set up which resulted in establishing a technologically and intellectually advanced civilization. Socio-structural transformation in any society indicates the predominance of media and its contribution to development.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the development of mass media and the foundation of global media. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the transformation of the media is accelerating as a consequence of digitalization of the content and its global distribution over digital platform to digital devices. Traditional Radio and T.V. will continue to be the most effective ways of delivering high quality information on issues such as health care and education and of debating issues of general interest and promoting a culture of peace. (World Electronic Media of Forum 2005).

The creation and dissemination of knowledge are the key factors in the development process where the media have been instrumental as the means of storing and sharing knowledge. For instance, U.K Department for International Development (DFID) cites the effectiveness of radio in promoting development in a wide range of disparate countries including Afganisthan, Moldava and Kiribati (DFID, 2006). The well recognized functions of media are to educate, inform and entertain where the social and economic contributions of media to development depend on the nature of the content delivered. Direct benefits of development flow from educating and informing with entertainment possibly acting as a book, 'Edutainment' is a common component of development projects. The media act as a significant driver of growth in many economies. Increased access to knowledge spurs higher levels of literacy, which strengthens human capital for higher productivity. The media serve as an important contributors to social and cultural life and key components of democratic structures. These contributions to development are often deliberately embodied in the media system. For example, Article 2 of South Africa's 1999 Broadcasting Act lists 18 goals for the Act, the first 2 of which involve:

- Strengthening democracy, social development, gender equality, nation building, education provision, and the spiritual and moral fiber of society.
- Safeguarding, enriching and strengthening the country's cultural, political, social and economic fabric.

In the contest of current orientation on media revolution, IEC (Information, Education and Communication) has been accorded the highest priority. Communication can be effective through media both electronic and print for 'edutainment' (Education through Entertainment) and 'infotainment' (Information through Entertainment). Both 'edutainment' and 'infotainment' are vital for behavioral change of the society.

It creates the conditions for good governance in which transparency and accountability are two important pillars of administration which can ensure transformational development of the society. Good governance is also vital for economic development and the development dividend that it generates is considerable (World Bank 2008). Plurality and transparency influence should be both top down and bottom up and media should reach the poorest and disadvantaged sections of the society and should play a catalyst role to accord the basic survival amenities to the poorest section of the society and to minister the most immediate needs of the people who are by-passed from developmental intervention. Media as the promoter of public opinion help create conducive atmosphere for healthy democratic order.

In India, newspapers have undeniably a vital role to play and an important duty to perform both as 'vox pupili'. (Voice of the people) and a builder of the public opinion. The media can be used for disseminating information and imparting

education to illiterate masses. The Press can perform its true role as a guardian of the public interest, a watchdog and a source of all kinds of information.

With the dawn of 21<sup>st</sup> century, human society has witnessed the emergence of an era of high-tech multi revolution and globalization of economic activities. We have tremendous progress in the fields of science, technology, education, commerce, industries and related fields. In this context, we can observe that the contribution of media to development has not yet achieved the degree of recognition that it deserves. However, this intellectual offspring in highlighting its role will assist in rising awareness, understanding and visible contribution of media to governance and development. Media show the way how to protect the society from all types of evils, discrimination and malpractices. A corruption free transparent social order will pave the way to development. Both print and electronic media in modern society ensures good governance where citizen's rights are well protected and documented.

Media as a vigilant checks inordinate delays in redressing people's grievances and find out the source of delay, unrest and corruption. It is the linking point between the government and

the public in eliciting public opinion regarding functional efficiency of the organs such as the executive, legislature and judiciary of the state. It should be involved in constructive criticisms to bring reformation by checking irregularities and discrepancies of any type. Its role in performance auditing of the governing institutions and also in shaping the public opinion is highly remarkable. However, it has the moral responsibility of being unbiased. The Press Council in India was set up under Act 37 of 1978 to safeguard the freedom of press to maintain and improve the standard of newspapers and news agencies.

The significance of media in democratic governance can be judged for its impartial and unbiased character which accords foremost priority on individual freedom and liberty. At the same time, it is also the high time for the media to undergo an assessment of its specialized function in democracy of H J Laski's famous dictum that 'eternal vigilance is the price of liberty'.

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## Media and Development

*Dr. Pramodini Jena*

Media means the press, radio, TV, Internet based and wireless communication. Media are for the larger part seen as a tool for communication for disseminating information, opinion, ideas, and cultural expressions. There are also cultural expressions that are media oriented, such as TV documentaries, soap operas and news reports. When referring to media as a business sector, the term media industry is used. The media is popularly viewed as the fourth pillar of democracy.

The media plays a pivotal role in the social, cultural, political, spiritual, economic, academic as well as the literary life of a nation. As it disseminates knowledge and information among the public and thereby making public aware, informative as well as vigilant about their rights, duties and the role they have to play in the society. The media not only brings out the plans, policies, programmes and the agenda for governance of the Govt. but also it makes the public aware of the failure in administration as well as the lacunae in governance. Media play a very active role in the process of national regeneration and resurgence. It creates a sense of renaissance and reformation in the minds of the public by demolishing the age old inertia and morbidity and thereby lifting the society into new heights of achievement and development.

The role of media in the literary and scholastic achievements and pursuits of a community is a matter to be reckoned with.

Above all media has become one of the most essential and indispensable part of modern life. We are living in an age where “knowledge is considered as power” and “media have become the social space where power is decided”.

It is rightly said that media use is an index of development. There is a proverb “As economics is to wealth, as political science to power, so media is to enlightenment; media development should be treated like economic development or political development”. The greater the use, the higher will be the level of education. As social beings, humans are sustained by mutual interactions, exchange of ideas, information and views with the fellow beings. Illiteracy, which is nothing but absence of education and information is a stumbling block for any aspect of development—social, economic, political, cultural and even spiritual. Media has become the harbinger of development through the removal of these roadblocks and the provision of information and knowledge.

Central to this argument are three of the pillars that form the central support structure for the current development consensus, a consensus to which most bilateral and multilateral development actors are explicitly committed.

The first of these pillars is that development strategies should be “owned” by the societies implementing them; in other words, they are the product of debate within these countries,

not the product of processes forced on them externally by donor organizations.

The second pillar is “accountability,” the notion that governments should be principally held to account by their citizens rather than to donor governments.

A third main pillar of current development policy—the eight Millennium Development Goals, the achievement of which frames most current international development efforts—could provide arguments in either direction. On the one hand, MDGs can be seen as a set of technical targets, largely free of political complexity, requiring the mass mobilisation of financial, technological and human resources that can be safely delivered by elected governments with little need for substantial public debate. Or they can be seen as a set of targets the meeting of which depends on a set of deeply political policy choices—such as cost recovery in education, health or water services, privatisation or otherwise of national utilities. In the latter case, the need for public understanding, the quality of spaces for public debate and the capacity of people most affected to have their perspectives legitimised in public debate become far more acute.

If citizens are to hold governments to account, they need access to information on government policy and on how and where funding allocated to benefit them is being spent. The poorer people need more such information. They also need the capacity to articulate their perspectives on these issues. The media provide one of the very few mechanisms available to fulfill these functions.

The development policy was increasingly dependent on media informing citizens—particularly poor citizens—on the issues that shape their lives, and dependent on them providing spaces and channels for people to communicate their perspectives. The question then becomes why on earth should the media fulfill

these functions? One answer is that most journalists have historically always defined their mission as speaking truth to power—in other words playing precisely the role that development actors interested in citizens holding governments to account would have them play. Another answer is the fact that the enabling environment both for speaking truth to power and for broader public debate has arguably increased immensely over the last two decades.

Covering development is not a glamorous or high status beat. This, ultimately, is why development actors should take a more active interest in the role of media and development and in sustaining democracy. There is a clear assumption in current development policy that media will play a certain role in society, holding governments to account and enabling informed public debate. Unless they play that role, current development strategies are likely to be undermined just as earlier development strategies (such as poverty reduction strategies) were. Democracies will exist in name, but not in substance, and are unlikely to prove sustainable or successful.

Development discourse over many years has been increasingly focused on notions of empowerment and participation. The logic of a new focus on ownership and accountability accentuates the need for such a focus. It complements and reinforces existing debates around rights based approaches to development and suggests a far more intensive interest in the role of media and communication in development. The net result may be a looming crisis in development assistance, where the essential media mechanisms that can ensure greater ownership and accountability. That development strategies need to be underpinned by are assumed to exist, but where in reality, those roles are under. Development policy arguably needs this role to be played, but development actors show limited strategic engagement in understanding or

supporting such a role. The media themselves may be too distracted by their own problems to engage substantively in such a debate. The alarming, and potentially highly damaging result for development efforts, is a vacuum of debate, action and leadership.

A third wave further arguing that development (in the all round sense) could only succeed if the developers themselves participated in it. Rather than being objects of media, as in the first two perspectives, the people should be subjects. This meant a praxis that was revolutionary - and which aimed at conscientising people to overthrow local agents of imperialism who were seen as the immediate stumbling block to development.

From the Modernization approach, one can take the point that it is indeed evident that the dissemination of media technology is an important question in development. Participation is part of ensuring that the global public sphere includes the interests of the underdeveloped. This is a contribution towards liberation. As a whole media has a critical bridging role to play—not only to reinforce dominance and dependency between exploited relation of first world and the actual integration of Third World economy but also began to critique the notion of “development”, saying that it had to incorporate a level of equity, else it was mere growth to the extent that change was envisaged.

In matters of freedom of religion or belief, media presents fair and balanced coverage. However, that is not always what happens. Media is essential for some kind of global media observatory for news coverage and representations of religion and religious affairs.

Mass and community media can unthinkingly reinforce stigmatisation and discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS.

Peace journalism falls squarely within the right to communicate - strengthening the ability of people and communities to make known their economic, political, social, and cultural aspirations in order to resolve tensions and reach peaceful solutions to conflict.

All new technologies of communication bring advantages and disadvantages. All such technologies have democratic potential. With new social media, there remain significant questions of accountability, affordable access, digital divides, surveillance, privacy, exploitation, and cultural transformation.

Today's many borders - physical and psychological, political and social, cultural and ideological - are no longer fixed or impermeable. Overcoming them is mainly about overcoming the socially constructed limitations of belonging to a certain place and going beyond what is apparently sure and secure. Media is highly essential for safe passage in Borderlands, the places of negotiation.

However, the role of media in general, and new media in particular, is a limited, albeit important, one. In short, it can play a supportive role, but is unlikely to be the driving force or catalyst - that is the place of wider, and over determining, political and economic processes. There is no “magic” that will be wrought. They can widen horizons, focus attention, raise aspirations and create a climate for development. They can help only indirectly to change strongly held attitudes or valued practices, but they can affect attitudes lightly held and channelize stronger beliefs. They can feed richer material into the interpersonal dialogue that must carry much of the informational flow in less technically developed areas. However, effective use of new media can still be of great value.

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# Media and Development

*Satyabrata Behura*

In the present scenario of development, no doubt, media works as the important factor. It refers to more indirect efforts at using existing media to convey messages about specific development issues. While disseminating information has been considered the primary function of media, now it is functioning as a check post in the fields of education, healthcare, business, disaster mitigation, corruption, minority empowerment and community development.

The media is now considered a combination of music, films, TV, radio, publishing, advertisements, and electronic games with all other associated technological devices. It is not only a question of time bound development in the social developmental sector, rather it is our intention to bring the media to front line to give a perfect shape to the development process. And what we get now is the expanded and proliferated form of media. This is because the media have been closely twisted together with technological changes—the consequences of which have affected content, platforms, and devices on a centuries-long virtuous circle. These developments have provided wider scope for various opportunities and new social, political, economical and ethical ideas.

The 19th century met many advances with the inventions of the telegraph, telephone, phonograph, jukebox, cinematography, wireless

telegraph, and loudspeaker, each of which separately added new media. Many of these inventions converged in the 20th century to transform the media. The transformation has created major social activities that show the direct contributions of the media to development.

Every new development in the field of media has extended the reach ability by changing the format of the media. The 20th century witnessed the development of mass media and the foundations of a global media. Both in the field of content production and distribution, the mass media are essentially a one-way phenomenon. The transformation of the media in the 21st century is moving quickly as a consequence of the digitalization of content and its global distribution over digital platforms to digital devices. It supplements as well as by-passes traditional methods by introducing two-way system of distribution and production with new devices. New media do not displace old. Rather, they sit side by side. Hardcopy newspapers and books are still published, but can also be accessed through the Internet. The news can be received on radios, watched on TVs, and accessed through computers and mobile handsets. In the developing world, especially in rural areas, radio (also community radio(s)) and TV play the primary roles, particularly where literacy is low. Traditional radio and TV is still there to be the most effective

ways of delivering high-quality information on issues such as healthcare and education, and of debating issues of general interest and promoting a culture of peace. In the development process, the creation and dissemination of knowledge are key factors where the media has been acting as the important means of storing and sharing knowledge.

For the sake of development media has not confined its limitations. With its well-known functions of educating, informing, and entertaining; the social and economic contributions of the media to development has polished its nature of the content delivered. Where 'Edutainment' is a common component of development projects, its functions of educating and informing is acting as a hook.

Increased access to knowledge through media has given rise to higher levels of literacy that strengthens human capital for higher productivity. The media are also successful in contributing to social and cultural life for the upbringing of democratic structures. These contributions to development are naturally embodied in the media system.

**Some of the important functions of media in the development are –**

**1. Safeguarding & strengthening the country's cultural, political, social and economic fabric :** The relevance of media broadly depends on the content delivered. The development impact of media content like education, information, entertainment and edutainment is related to the relevance of the content delivered. It is the content that can be read accessible and meaningful to broad segments of society and that the information delivered be adapted and disseminated in formats and languages that diverse social groups can understand and act on.

**2. Plurality and transparency :** As the society is confronting newer changes every time and people are in touch with foreign media agents, an automated change has taken place. Media environment has reached its height in creating such environment which ensures good governance, transparency, and the functioning of economic, social and political situations which can be considered as the media's political economy role. Plurality and transparency has the overarching impact on the development process and individual development initiatives. A plural media environment creates wider scope to access to information and diffusion of knowledge within a country. Plural media support informed decision making, increased accountability, responsiveness and contribute to anti-corruption efforts.

**3. Behavioral :** The functioning limitation of media is no more handled by few. It acts with more proficiency when individuals, groups and organizations work together for themselves in an inspiring way to enable all for a behavioral change. Media's ability to influence behavior can be evident from the budget spent on advertising. In a simple way it can be said that media's participation has brought a great change from the grass root level to the upper level of bureaucracy and judicial system.

**4. Infrastructure and platform :** Transformational development is the demand of this age where opinions are not motivated by pressurized groups or by any means of influence, rather media itself takes a form to capture the truth and go with that, whatever the situation may be.

**5. Economic :** Talking of media and economy in one hand was considered to be useless but the modern industrialisation policy, budgeting, minutely changes in world financial situations strengthen the media. Everything in accordance to your need is there on the mediabook like any other social sites.

**6. Trade :** Trade in media, mainly audio-visual products is substantial but asymmetric; certain trade barriers restrain investments and limit opportunities for developing country exports, and so the media's potential contribution to development.

In our increasingly digital geopolitical environment, social and mobile media have been an all-pervasive subject, spreading fast from the daily use of millions of people all over the world through to newsrooms, media reports and academic study.

Media at present serves twofold purpose as an agent of extension and elaborator of hurdles

which stands on the way of development. The material and moral development of a nation depends a lot on information of scientific, social and political knowhows and eradication of superstitions, negative traditional practices, succumbing to corrupt practices both social, bureaucratic and political. Media is now not only an entertainer nor a teacher but it acts as guide, friend and philosopher of citizens, who are brick units of our nation.

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## Media and Development

*Shweta Padhi*

“Media has been spotting every person. Be it the celebrity or the common man.” “Newspapers always excite curiosity. No one ever lays down one without a feeling of disappointment”-said Charles Lamb.

It is this art of generating curiosity that compels its readers to read on. Hence, the most ordinary of news can be so presented to catch the immediate attention of the readers or listeners. It is the most important and effective media of mass communication. Not only news, but ever since its birth it has played a pivotal role in forming and moulding public opinion. During our struggle for independence, newspapers played a stellar role in acting as mouthpiece of national leaders to form a favourable public opinion. Even after Independence, it has on many occasions acted as a crusader to raise issues that are continuous, but nevertheless requires public debate. It has also helped to keep the democratic traditions alive, by offering a forceful voice of dissent, which is the lifeline for any true democracy to flourish. A free press works like a watchdog in democracy.

Media has been growing vigorously without looking back. Media has been honoured as the most powerful and prestigious post. Just not the newspaper that appeals the man today, Television, radio has also been found influencing people. On the other hand, media doesn't seem to spread at every part of the city or place. These are places where media or mode of communication doesn't reach. There are a lot of places where media has to reach or the mode of communication has to improve. English, being the most suitable language is not understood by a lot of commoners, neither, Hindi being the national language is understood. A lot of common people are still unaware of things going around the globe. Media is a very challenging area, where truth stands at its place and the mask of lie is revealed.

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## Freedom of Speech

*Sanat Mishra*

Freedom of Speech is recognized as a Right to Freedom in our Constitution. It is most precious gift of democracy which emerged during the European Enlightenment. After Independence the writers of our Drafting Committee included this as a Fundamental Right in our Constitution. Freedom of speech is a powerful instrument for all civilized and democratic nations of the world. Now-a-days we are living in a world dominated by mass media. Sometimes media becomes partial and coloured. A free press can help to remove the evils of the society. The power of the electronic media is immense in our society. NGOs are also playing crucial role in spreading awareness of democratic rights. But his freedom of speech is not absolute, it is limited by our social duties and obligations.

One wonders as to what would have been the course of history of many countries in the world, had freedom of speech been completely denied to their inhabitants. One celebrated instance of freedom of speech and its historical outcome is forcefully described by Shakespeare in his drama "Julius Caesar". After the murder of Julius Caesar, some leading lights of Rome assembled at a place to offer justification for assassination of Caesar. Caesar, according to them, had become a threat to the freedom of Romans. Antony, a friend of Caesar begs for one

opportunity to go to the stage and pay his tribute to the dead Caesar. Once he gets the permission to speak, he makes the fullest use of his freedom of speech and explains to the audience how Caesar had undergone hardships to serve the people. Bit by bit, he builds up a highly sympathetic opinion among the crowd of listeners and they are converted from being haters of Caesar to lovers of Caesar. Not only that, most of the Romans thereafter started hating Brutus for his dastardly act of killing Caesar. Antony, through the clever exercise of his freedom of speech is able to turn the table on the conspirators and mobilize pro-Caesar forces to defeat Brutus and his co-conspirators.

Towards the first half of the twentieth century most colonized countries of the world were swept by freedom movements aimed at restoring freedom of speech and other basic freedoms which only self governing nations can ensure. India, too witnessed growing agitation of freedom fighters against the British Regime. While leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel traversed the length and breadth of the country criticizing the despotism and repression of the British Rulers, Netajee Subhash Chandra Bose organized Indians, mostly prisoners of war, outside India into Azad Hind Fauj ( Indian National Army) to fight the British

and free our country from the foreign yoke. He thundered, "Offer me your blood and I will ensure the freedom of India". His fiery speeches inspired thousands of men and women who fought valiantly and even freed some parts of India from the British Rulers before they were overwhelmed by the superior might of the British. After the conclusion of 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, most of the colonial powers felt that they could no longer deny half the population of the world democratic freedom, and they granted freedom to many Asian and African countries.

The spirit of the age at the turn of the twentieth century is characterized by free enquiry and freedom of expression. The last two decades have witnessed the collapse of totalitarian regimes in the communist countries of Eastern Europe and progressive democratization in China. Gorbachev brought in "Perestroika" (Restructuring) and Glasnost (Openness) and Russia bade good bye to seven decades of regimentation and iron-curtains. Thorough-going reforms were introduced to usher in a multi-party democracy, freedom of speech and transparency in the functioning of the government. Gorbachev's initiative was hailed by Chinese students too who gathered in large numbers at Beijing's Tiananmen Square in April-May 1989 to protest against the

corrupt one party rule and to demand democratic rights. On 4<sup>th</sup> June, 1989, the Chinese government used army with tanks and guns and killed students in hundreds and curbed the uprising. After this protest, however, state control over business, industrial and educational sphere was loosened and greater freedom of expression was allowed in China. A new kind of free market economy has been introduced in China promoting prosperity and civil liberties in the country.

With the crumbling of the last major bastion of totalitarianism in Russia and China, most of the world has accepted liberal democratic system. Experience of civil liberties has whetted the appetite for greater freedom and transparency. Wherever people are taking initiative to liberate themselves from repressive political order, they are getting moral support of the people of free countries. It is hoped that proliferation of human rights and freedom of speech will reinforce the liberty of man throughout the world.

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# Ethics and Media

*Shovna Muduli*

Media is the mirror of the times and the society we live in. It reflects the happenings and events of the society that has been witnessing constant changes over the time. It brings to us a world full of happenings, and helps connect with the world we live in. Thanks to a plethora of media that living in one corner of the globe doesn't hamper our desire to enlighten ourselves with the happenings on the other corner. Rather it widens our horizon and nourishes our ideas and thoughts. Media thus has a tremendous impact on the way a society conducts itself in the present, as well as the shape it would take in the future.

The media should be more responsible and accountable for they have the power to influence the public psyche. But it seems like every industry, media too is governed by one principle: SELLING. Media which started as a mission has gradually turned into an industry which like any other business works for profit. And in this rat race of making profit i.e competing for increased TRP ratings and circulation numbers, it has some where somehow chosen to either ignore the ethics of the profession or has actually forgotten to draw the line.

Some of the areas where the media seems to have compromised with ethics are:

## 1. Paid News

Since the days of India's freedom struggle, the media has been recognised as sensitive, patriotic and a very influential tool in the socio-political sphere. The Father of the Nation, Mahatama Gandhi initiated his movement with the moral power of active journalism. However, a cancer in the form of paid news that has been diagnosed with the Indian media in the recent past has tarnished Media's image. A report on paid news by the Press Council of India has indicted many publishers and broadcasters of taking money for reporting on state assembly elections in 2004 and 2009; praising one candidate while maligning others; which had a significant effect on the voting results.

The report says, "It is widely believed that many media companies, irrespective of the volume of their businesses and their profitability, were 'selling' news space after arriving at an 'understanding' with politicians and representatives of corporate entities that were advertisers. Space in publications and airtime were occupied by advertisements that were disguised as 'news'."

This raises serious questions on the moral conduct of the Indian journalists who are, by and large, honoured and accepted as the torch bearers

in the society and considered as the fourth pillar of democracy. And why only the journalists, people at the editorial and management level too seem to be equal partners or may be the commanding force in the job.

## 2. Reporting crime and police investigation

Bringing crime stories and police investigation to the forefront definitely keeps the citizens aware and alert about the ills and evils of the society, and reinforces their faith in the police. However, reports containing details of the crime and the police investigation alerts the criminals too. They become cautious of the steps taken by the police and accordingly plan an intelligent escape adding challenges to the police, and posing a grave threat to the public.

## 3. Sensationalism

The trend of blowing up the inconsequential or sensationalising has become quite a handy tactic for most of the media houses to grab the circulation numbers and TRP ratings. Now be it an off-political argument between two politicians, be it a gay couple sharing a room or slip-off of a fashion model from the ramp, the story scripted for these 'not so newsy' stories takes them to a different level all together. Compelled to drive viewership, channels are even going to the extent of hiring stand-up comedians, inviting astrologers to the studio for viewer phone-ins and putting up dance, music and sometimes even reality based shows. In such a case, media is not only losing its credibility but also seems to have been distorting its very purpose in the society.

## 4. Undue attention to celebrities and popular figures

Though film stars and sports icons have been constant source of inspiration for all of us in some or the other way, media seems to have gone way beyond it. The treatment of stories of

unnecessary details of these celebrities is so often that sometimes even the plight or the success story of a common man goes unnoticed or unreported. News is not about what beauty regime does an actress follow or how often does a sports star visit his favourite restaurant, news is how a citizen fights for his rights and exposes the government neglect. Unfortunately, bitten by the bug of TRP and circulation, media is chasing and overcovering these issues.

## 5. Exaggeration and losing credibility

Be it a simple story of a conflict in a college campus or a sensitive story of a conflict between the government and the red rebels, or say a communal conflict, media tends to take sides instead of reporting both the sides in equal light. As a result, this aggravates the situation and leads to a series of more conflicts which, however, again falls to media's advantage. Moreover, India having quite a delicate social fabric comprising of multi religious, multilingual and multi ethnic denominations, the journalists should stop showing favouritism and stop exaggerating as well, or else it will disturb the equilibrium of the society and lose public faith and confidence.

## 6. Privacy

According to the guidelines of the Press Council of India, intrusion or invasion in the privacy of the individuals is not permissible unless outweighed by genuine overriding public interest, not being a prurient or morbid curiosity. However, the journalists too often run over people's private lives. The paparazzi follows the celebrities wherever they go and are too hungry to capture their moments and movements. It is true that celebrities are public figures and their private moments interest people, but like any other human being they too have the right to privacy and lead life with dignity. But this becomes difficult when intimate details of a person's life, his or her

innermost thoughts, fears and desires are exposed to public gaze by the media, despite knowing that they are not of legitimate public concern. Media may gain monetary benefits out of stories such as newly married star couple's honeymoon but in the long run it loses public confidence and respect.

Although the period after Independence has witnessed a considerable degradation of ethics in media, the basic values adhered to by the Indian media over the ages, still continue to inspire. The media has always risen to the situation whenever there is a crisis.

However, in this era of new journalism that is booming with information and mindboggling entertainment, with global invasion and competition becoming too inevitable, the need of the hour is sober introspection by the journalists and not losing the focus on the paramount duty of the media to be the fourth estate without making any compromise with vested interest.

Quoting the words of reaction of Ashish Bagga, President of Indian Newspaper Society

in the context of the Press Council of India's move to bring the electronic media under its control, "Press in India is time-tested and self-regulated with enough maturity to continue to play the crucial role of the fourth estate of our vibrant democracy responsibly." But with the media giving instances of intentionally compromising with the ethics to its advantage, and the Press Council of India claiming self-regulation to be oxymoron, it is high time the media realises its social and moral responsibility, and stops quenching its thirst for the ugly and the unwanted, that may elevate them to an illusionary height but in the long run pose a question on its credibility.

So let us hope that the Media acts as a mirror that reflects the society, and not a lens that magnifies certain things and minimizes others, although both reflect images.

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# Media and Development

*Prof. Anurag Sahu*

## CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

Development is not purely an economic phenomenon but rather a multi-dimensional process involving recognition and reorientation of entire economic and social system. Since much writings and definitions often start with economic development or per capita income, the real development process involves not only changes in the economic structure, but is interlinked with the entire social, political and cultural fabric of the society. It is necessary to note that development does not mean mere increase in the per capita income or mere industrialization but a process involving a number of qualitative changes, nothing less than the upward movement of the entire social system. Development may be interpreted as attainment of a number of modernization ideas, such as rise in productivity, social and economic equalization, modern knowledge and improved institutions and attitudes. Proper and adequate development is not done by dislodging people from their roots, culture and environments. Proper development always helps people to self-sufficient and self-reliant.

According to some renowned economists development works as a process of expanding the real freedom that people enjoy. Growth of GNP ( Gross National Product ) or of individual income can of course, be very important

as means to expanding the freedoms enjoyed by the members of the society. Development requires the removal of major sources of bondage : poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance over activity of repressive states.

Some social activists and renowned communication experts defines that development is removal of poverty, lessening of disparity between regions and classes, building up of the technological infrastructure, modernization of society through shedding feudalism, tribalism and superstition, of the gradual achievement, economic reliance. Development is measured in the improvement of the lives of the people and the strengthening of the family's or the individual's capacity to deal with the rest of the society and of the nation's capacity to deal with the world.

Another concept of development suggests an index of physical quality of life as evidenced by the sate of literacy, life expectancy, infant mortality etc. Yet another notion of development emphasizes freedoms, capabilities and entitlement for better life, which could be expressed in term of a scale, similar to those considered under quality of life. One of the recent entries in the alternative development prospective is sustainable development. It draws attention to the need to conserve resources so that the process

of development would be sustainable without endangering the resources for the future generation.

According to the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation Report development would mean different things to different people in different countries depending on the national priorities ; one child family in China, decreased pesticide use in Philippines, Corruption in India and so on.

The concept and definition of development is ever changing and various objectives are given importance at different time period. But in order to keep the process on, media has been playing a very significant role in enhancing public activism and in drawing attention to the deprivation of the socially and economically backward section of the society. Role of media in the process of development has been recognized as crucial. The fact that people's participation is an essential condition for the success of any developmental programmes. The media can act as an effective catalyst giving way to social transformation.

#### **MASS MEDIA IN BRIEF :**

The media can be considered a combination of content – music, films, TV, radio, publishing, advertisements and electronic games – along with associated technological devices. Over time what constitutes 'the media' has both expanded and proliferated. This became the media which have been closely entwined with technological changes – the consequences of which have affected content, platforms and devices as a whole. These developments have also provided for ownership opportunities and new business models. Each new development extends the reach and changes the format of the media.

We live in a society that depends on information and communication to keep moving in the right direction and do our daily activities

like work, entertainment, health care, education, personal relationships, traveling and anything else that we have to do. In the world of today, media has become almost as necessary as food and clothing. It is true that media is playing an outstanding role in strengthening the society; it's a mirror of the society. Its duty is to inform, educate and entertain the people. It is partly because of them that awareness is spreading in the society. It is the media which shape our lives. Our lives would be incomplete without the media. Our decisions are based on the information that we get from our co workers, news, friends, family, etc. What we need to be aware is that most of our decisions, beliefs and values are based on what we know for a fact, our assumptions and our own experience. In our work we usually know what we have to do on our experience and studies, however on our daily lives we rely on the media to get the current news and facts about what is important and what we should be aware of. We have put our trust on the media as an authority to give us news, entertainment and education. However, the influence of mass media on our kids, teenagers and society is so big that we should know how it really works.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the development of mass media and foundation of a global media. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the transformation of the mass media is accelerating as a consequences of the digitalization of content and it's global distribution over digital platforms to digital devices. Both the print and electronic media houses just doubled their numbers in the last few years. With the pace and rhythm of industrial development and signing of MoUs the regional print and electronic media became healthier day by day. New media do not displace old. Rather they sit side by side. The number of hardcopy newspapers and books publishing are increasing day by day. The same content of those books and newspapers can be accessed on the

internet. Launching of number of 24 hours satellite news channels and publishing number of news papers and extending number of editions will not certainly make a state developed. All the media organizations should bear a strong sense of objective and media policy and everybody's goal should be centered towards the development of the society. Developmental stories don't have any clear cut definition. It depends on countries, states and sometimes for the whole mankind's requirement. Almost all the media organizations want to be the forward player in the media race for getting highest TRP or getting a favor of ABC. But it is the high time to re-valuate all media entrepreneurs about how much space they are sparing for developmental stories and in case of news channels how much time they are sparing for developmental stories round the clock.

The media scenario has undergone spectacular change since independence. India has been witnessing a revolution in communication technology. But in the Indian context, the yardstick of development is entirely different. The level of progress we have achieved is not adequate because of the deviating from the real objective. In the last few decades another new trend of Journalism is introduced that is Development Journalism. Particularly in a developing country like India, development journalism must concern itself with the people. It must show them how to improve their bargaining power with the society. It must make them realize that their future is in their hands. It must describe the process of backbone building. This new trend of journalism must concern itself with the people. It must show them how to improve the bargaining power with the society. It must describe the process of change and modernization, the new discoveries and the products. In the last two decades the world has witnessed tremendous growth in the media industry. Both the print and electronic media houses just doubled. With the pace and rhythm

of industrial development print and electronic media became healthier day by day. Several trends are apparent in the media – most of which have a long history, some of which are new and all of which are experiencing the impact of digitization. As these trends unfold and intertwine they will impact the contribution of the media to development.

A characteristic feature of our country is that it is predominantly rural in its economy. The role of mass media for the holistic development of the people has not received much attention. This is more so in India, where 80 per cent of the people live in villages. Mass media have been considered as potential agencies for the development of people primarily because their reach is wide. Mass media are very suitable instrument for rapid development of developing countries like India. Media has important role in fostering National Unity, literacy, educational technology, distance education, environmental reporting for sustainable development and women empowerment. Developing the theme of National Unity and elaborating the concept like Nationalism, National identity, sub-nationalism is a delightful and inspiring experience. Instances from China where media could be harnessed for enhanced national awareness and Nigeria where media are viewed as National Unifier are particularly noteworthy. The Indian experiences has been different where as the electronic media – so far under the control of Government – are mended to uphold the unity of the country. It has been widely felt in practice that Delhi-centric view has been projected neglecting other parts of the country. There seems to be some validity in the perception that at times enough sensitivity has not always been shown to the cultures, customs and languages from states.

The creation and dissemination of knowledge are key factors in the development process – where the media have been instrumental

as a means of storing and sharing knowledge. The well recognized functions of the media are to educate, inform and entertain where the social and economic contributions of the media to development depend on the nature of the content delivered. Direct development benefits flow from educating and informing, with entertainment possibly a 'hook'. "Edutainment" is a common component of development project.

The development impact of media content- education, information, entertainment and edutainment is related to the relevance of the content delivered. Relevance requires that the information delivered be adapted and disseminated in formats and languages that diverse social groups can understand and act on. Quite often the most relevant content is local, though the concept of "local" operates at different levels – from national to community.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF CONTENT PRODUCTION :**

We all are experiencing the continuously expansion and evolvement of mass media. To understand these trends, it is necessary to consider some important characteristics of the industrial economics of content production :

- ❖ **The irrelevant factor :** A wide range of content is offered, but individuals sample a minute fraction of these offerings.
- ❖ **The packaging factor :** For publishing and aggregators it makes sound business sense to assemble an array of relevant and irrelevant materials in one offering to attract mass audience. Newspapers illustrates irrelevance and packaging, offering numerous sections, supplements and pullouts on sports, business, travel, food, health, society and other topics. Some of which are thrown away by readers at the point of sale.

❖ **The venture Capital factor :** Similarly investors are encouraged to take a bundled portfolio approach in an environment of bits and largely misses.

❖ **The fluidity factor :** Most media content can be repackaged into different formats and for different platforms and devices. For instance, recorded music can be repackaged as a stage musical that is later made into a film, for which a sound track of recorded music and ringtones are sold. A theme ride in an amusement park, a cartoon character, a comic book, a TV serial and even a toy may become a film and then a video-game or the process may be reversed. Any successful content product (such as best selling book) is a pre-tested candidate product for reformatting is a different medium.

The media are at the cutting edge of technological change, where the digitalization of content, Next Generation Networks, falling device and distribution costs, ever-increasing abundance and new business models are overturning the pre-existing order of markets and the media, though broadcasting, particularly radio remain crucial in developing countries. This offers new development opportunities requiring new policy initiatives, and the realization of this by the development community. In many instances the media has yet to attain its appropriate status on the list of development priorities.

The media are significant driver of growth in many economics. The business of producing content generates substantial income flows and jobs that contribute directly to the economy. Increase access to knowledge spurs higher level of literacy, which strengthens human capital for higher productivity. The media are also important contributors to social and cultural life and key components of democratic structures. These

contributors to development are often deliberately embodied in the media system.

It is clear that the formal media production sector has a substantial and growing economic presence, including a high proportion of micro, small and medium enterprises. Digital media is a major driver of investment in broadband infrastructure and e-commerce, both of which can transfer the development process. The media's contribution to development occurs simultaneously along five closely intermingled influences: plurality and transparency, behavioural, infrastructure and platform, economic, and trade.

- ❖ **Plurality and transparency** : The contribution that a plural media environment makes good governance, transparency and the functioning of markets (economic and political) which can be seen as the media's political-economic role.
- ❖ **Behavioural** : - The media's contribution to inspiring beneficial changes in the behaviours of individuals, groups and organisations.
- ❖ **Infrastructure and platform** : - Compelling content is essential for and the main driver of investment in new convergent broadband infrastructure and platforms, which hold the potential for transformational development.
- ❖ **Economic** : - The media provide many jobs, especially in smaller size enterprises.
- ❖ **Trade** : - Trade in India, mainly audio-visual products is substantial but asymmetric, certain trade barriers restrain investments and limit opportunities for developing country's exports and so, the media's potential contribution to development.

## MASS MEDIA AND SOCIAL ISSUES

### Poverty

Media and other forms of communication can play a vital role in improving the conditions of

life for the world's poorest people. Some of people who are concerned about development issues have been interested in media. They have tried to find ways in which communication and particularly the mass media like newspapers, radio and television can be used to help countries develop and thus reduce the amount of poverty. Most recently, there has been enormous interest in the potential of the internet to aid in development. Many of those who have tried to use the media for development have been activists – journalists, broadcasters, development workers and politicians – but some have had more theoretical role. There had been thousands of books and articles dedicated for trying to understand what role the media might play in development and to find ways in which might play such a role more effectively. Unlike many areas of communication theory, these investigations have often been closely tied to practice; Scholars have theorized about the best way to use the media to help development and activists have tried to implement their findings.

### Education

Education and media have been harnessed to bring about changes in attitude and values – so essential for the task of nation building. Although media certainly have the potential to aid the education system of the country, the success depends upon ensuring the media technology fulfills the needs of learners, teachers and society. Media are particularly suited as adjuncts to Distance Education and Open Learning System. The fact remains that Open and Distance Learning System would not have created a viable and lasting effect, within the overall traditional system of classroom teaching and university education, but for the extensive use of media and communication technologies. Communication not only generates an educational environment, it becomes a vehicle for education. Media technology is being increasingly harnessed to expand educational opportunities.



## Environment

Since the 1972 Stockholm UN Conference on Environment, issues concerning environment and development have received sustained media attention. Environment reporting focuses virtually on contemporary crisis of survival. The media coverage of grass root movements throughout the country has certainly the awareness level of environmental issues. Since environmental problems are assuming global dimensions and infringe upon decision taken at multi-lateral levels, the interest generated ranges from the local issues of urban sanitation and deforestation to global warming and green house effects. Environmental issues have also generated “rethink” about the aid and funding procedures of the World Bank, construction of big dams and other environmental projects.

## NATIONAL MEDIA POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT :

The International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems in its Report (1987) recommended : Communication be no longer regarded as an incidental service and its development left no chance. Recognition of it's potential warrants the formulation by all nations and particularly developing countries, of comprehensive communication policies linked to overall social, cultural, economic and political goals. Such policies should be based on inter-ministerial and inter-disciplinary consultants with broad public participation.

Stressing the importance of communication policies, the report said, communication policies and development strategies have been considered as essential means of solving the major problems. The then Chairman of Press Council of India, A.N. Sen has however, been of the opinion that it may not be wise to seek to lay down any firm National Media Policy, as the effective implementation of

the policy may create any problem that is likely to solve; although there may not be any difficulty in arriving at a general consensus as to certain norms to be observed by the media instead of seeking to lay down any firm National Media Policy. A policy is generally formulated and adopted for achieving a particular object. In the absence of any such object or fixed goal, there can be no question of framing any policy. A policy adopted for achieving no particular purpose will indeed be meaningless. To properly understand and appreciate whether any National Media Policy is at all necessary at this juncture, we have to bear in mind two important considerations :

1. Whether the same can be adopted without interfering with the independence of media; and
2. Exactly what is the object that the media are expected to achieve and what is the purpose which the media seek to serve.

## CONCLUSION

The transformation of the media continues apace. In its latest phase to top-down pre-existing order is being thoroughly shaken-up. More people in more places can create, distribute, access and apply knowledge in the form of media content – an armed, drive development. For talent rich developing countries, there are new opportunities for redefining new media related development structure. At the same time the development community has to reset its sights.

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## Mass Media and Rural Development

*Pradipta Ku. Biswal*

Mass media, the fourth pillar of democracy plays a pivotal role in upkeeping the socio-political system of a country sound and healthy. Due to the advancement of information and communication technology (ICT), the role of mass media has been multiplied to a higher order. Man has conquered time and space due to this modern technology. The print and electronic media remain at the helm of affairs in every nook and corner of the world. Media touches the remotest village and unfolds the irony behind the scene. Mass media really connects the whole universe with a noble mission to share the sorrows and sufferings, pains and strains, success stories of the society. It always, if properly managed, takes a vital part in political affairs. As we know the development of a country depends upon the political will power, it fires not only the spirit of legislature but also the other two pillars of democracy. Analysis of the affairs of a country is highly essential for smooth progress. Mass media perform the role of a dynamic watchdog and erects its fingers towards any backlog in a system. It diagnoses the system and opens the pitfalls and tries to rectify it.

As we know, our country believes in a democratic way of living and India has completed sixty five years of its independence. It is still in its youth stage. Our country has been successfully surviving as the largest democracy of the world.

The political thinkers of our country have provided a new way of functioning for the rural India as seventy percent of the total population reside here. A sizeable number of population consist of tribes who have their own compartment of culture. It is rightly said 'the soul of India remains in villages.' In last two decades it is observed that liberalism has its impact on various dimensions of the human civilization. Establishment of market economy creates challenge to traditional cultures and values. The rich cultural heritage of our country faces a setback due to cultural homogenization. It affects the urban population most and gradually creeps into rural circle. Neoliberal consensus makes culture simple but it loses its identity. But despite of serious blow to the rural India it inherits the cultural heritage. As the modern society is the consumer of mass culture produced by the developed countries like USA, the country like ours now faces challenge in the conservation of our culture. But the rural India is still shining with a rich cultural outcome. Cultural plurality is found in its soul though it has some modern touch.

Mass media is a powerful influencer in the present go of life. Starting from book to internet it has catalytic action to the wide population. It acts as a mass mobilizer irrespective of literacy. It distributes message abruptly. Where administration can't reach, mass media touches

the heart of the darkest spot of the globe. There was a time where the rural India had no chance to think over a daily newspaper, whereupon there was a wide gap between rural and urban segment. But now rural culture with urban taste prevails in rural India. Still we have to go a long way to generate awareness among rural people. It does not imply that urban people with all modern amenities have nothing to change for enriching our culture.

Several national programmes have been launched for poverty alleviation, employment generation, food security, abolition of child labour, safeguard of human rights, empowerment of women, ensuring education for all, right to information, rural electrification, safe drinking water, road connectivity, access to mass media, etc. Prominent among them are Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), National Land Records Modernisation Programme (NLRMP), Integrated watershed Management Programme (IWMP), Right To Information (RTI), Right To Education (RTE), Rashtriya Madhyamik Sikshya Abhiyan (RMSA), formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs).

All these programmes need special care by the media personnel for smooth arrival of these programmes to the needy people of the country. Television broadcast programme and community radio service are very helpful in this regard. Newspapers and journals have no less importance in propagating the mission of the government.

Our State Government has initiated several commendable steps for all sections of our society. It has launched Biju KBK Yojana, Janani

Suraksha Yojana, Supply of rice at the rate of rupees two to BPL families. Mo Pokhari Yojana, Mo Kudia Yojana, Biju Rural Electrification Plan, Madhubabu Pension Plan, Bi-cycle Scheme for students of tenth standard, bore well to farmers, compensation to the farmers for drought and untimely rain, several welfare programmes for SC/ST & rural road connecting programme, internet connectivity, incentives to SHGs etc. For the successful implementation of these programmes media has a responsible role to play. In order to generate awareness there is no other weapon than mass media. The Rural Development Department of Odisha since its inception and Panchayati Raj Department is thriving ahead for implementing rural welfare plans. Rural works, rural water supply and sanitation are major thrust areas of rural programmes. But as we know due to ignorance of the people the welfare programmes donot yield desirable results. Hence media especially electronic media has to play a vital role in generating awareness among rural people. Every Panchayat is connected with website and Gram Rozgar Sebaks are ready to provide up-to-date knowledge to rural people. 'Knowledge is the best vaccine for all maladies'. Mass media can provide knowledge to each section of people.

Some say mass media is opiate of masses and others say it is a vital aspect of human society. As we know we are living in a globalised knowledge world we have to change ourselves to cope up with this changing world. Sometimes mass media is criticized on ethical ground. Sometimes media publishes distorted news which creates imbalance in the society. It is the responsibility of the media persons to go deep into the matter before publication. They should publish real, judicious, true facts rather than polarized stories. It should be free from any bias. It should try to develop four types of citizenship political, economic, social and cultural citizenship.

Especially the cultural citizenship involves new democratic structures of dissemination and control of information and culture (Mass media and art etc) which allow every member of the community to take part in the process and at the same time develop his/her intellectual and cultural potential. The elite which control them filter out the views of reality which they see to be fit to be made public. The press people most of the times feel hard pressed to express freely the real views. Individuals use the press for their benefit and for

favour of their groups and it sometimes mobilizes the people in a wrong way. Freedom of press is highly essential for its better performance. Commercialization, politicisation, individualization of press leads to yellow journalism. Hence press should be a regulator and reflector of public opinion in an unprejudiced and honest manner.

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## Ethics and Media

*Anwasha Mohanty*

Media is undoubtedly very fast, vast and powerful mode of communication. Nor does it only appeal a vast audience it has got a tremendous impact on the political run of a country and culture of a society. Films, TV shows, Journalism (newspapers and news channels) all come under short yet large "Media". By "Ethics and Media" we generally discuss the ethics in journalism which influences the mindset of people and moulds the society. Starting from weather forecast to "what will be your future ?" It tells you anything and everything. With such an impact any misconduct or irresponsible act can not only affect but shake the very base on which we have laid our so much comfortable lives. Sadly this is what happening. So much power has come into their hands that they have started taking advantage of the faith and liability of people. It has given away its base to the cheap "money making" business. False stories are made huge sensation, money stops the news of many to create high class business people

and politicians indulged in illegal practices. Cheap news are made highlight. Flooding of Amitabh Bachchan's house is a news but so many villages smashed by the flood is not covered as news. SRK's protein diet to get 6 packs is a news but the plight of millions in starvation is not a news. They clearly show what will make people stick to their channels or get a copy of their newspaper everyday. Ethics in media is lacking so much so that people have now started to question its credibility. Without claiming of being original, said "with great power comes great responsibility." With more than 7000 newspapers and 80 news channels running in the country can't a common man turn to any one of 7080 to get original 'un-made' news, to know exactly how is his life going to be altered the next day ?

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## Media Responsibilities and Ethics

*Puspanjali Paikaray*

Media has been rightly considered as the fourth pillar of Indian Democracy. Democracy can thrive not only under the vigilant eye of its legislatures, but also under the care and guidance of public opinion and the press in “par excellence” is the vehicle through which opinion can be articulated. Its role is not only limited to reflecting public opinion but in instructing it and giving it proper orientation and guidance. For this reason, media acclaim moral right to free expression, which is supposed to be free from deliberately making irresponsible errors.

In recent years, blended with advance technology, media has become more powerful than before. It has become a significant driver of growth in Economics, socio-economic development, strengthening of democracy and also safeguarding and enriching the cultural, political and social fabrics of the Nation. Lying on the basis of ethical principles, the media sometimes forget its social obligation and moral rights. Though the Constitution of India has conferred the Press the Freedom of Speech or the Freedom of Expression vide, its Article 19(1), at the same time in Article 19 (2) provides reasonable restrictions on exercise of freedom of expression and speech in the interest of (a) sovereignty and integrity of India (b) the security of the State (c) friendly relations with the

foreign states (d) public order : decency or morality (e) contempt of court (f) defamation (g) incitement to an offence. So it is not justified to say that absolute rights have been conferred to media to right to speak or publish without responsibility whatever one may choose. With all such constitutional provisions and side by side restrictions and with around forty numbers of norms and conditions on ethics and principles of Journalism which is laid by Press Council of India, some sections of media, though not all, devoid of ethics for the growth of their channel / publications.

Some prominent events cannot be omitted without citing examples. The event which occurred on the night of July, 9, 2012 in Guwahati, triggered nationwide consciousness. A teenaged girl after attending a birthday party at a pub in the populated area of Guwahati was manhandled and tortured by a group of 20 to 30 youths. A local news channel “News Live” as its studio was nearby, recorded the shameless incident and broadcast it. The video went viral on the internet after the channel posted it on “Tube” that shocked the nation. The mob molested the girl for more than 30 minutes until passersby and police rescued her. But that channel’s reporter and camera person failed to carry the human approach and were only interested in ratings. This event brought heavy reaction on the behaviour of the

men who outraged the modesty of the teenaged girl and also raised an ageold question about the media, that, should a journalist be a silent observer of such a shameless act ?

Eventhough, News-Live's crew of Guwahati helped the police to identify and arrest the molesters but at the same time failed to inform the police instantly which raised eyebrows on their moral duties. Instead, the reporter instigated the mob to act such disgraceful act for TRP (Television Rating Point) of their channel. By that time there was a wide coverage of that event and news in other media also published out that the local channel team interrogated the girl about her identity which was purely unethical. For the sake of popularity of the channel, they invited nationwide criticism. As a result of which the editor-in-chief of that particular channel resigned from the job and the reporter quit the job. But it was unfortunate, that the national media forgot to analyse this unethical side whereas focusing on arrest of the culprits and failure of law and order situation of Assam.

Similar event also happened in Gaya of Bihar, where, out of frustration a woman poured kerosene on her to set fire and to put herself into end. Seeing the event, a cameraman available there, did not resist her rather took her photograph for his credit. If it is minutely analysed many such events take place where media fails to live up to its human obligation and are only interested in rating.

In print media also, such types of events happen, when there is corporate conflicts, political rivalry, crime detection, forgetting moral contention media put them into controversy. Some reporters and editors pose different attitude for the reputation of their papers, knowingly they distort the news keeping the truth far behind. It not only affects the public also raise questions on their credibility.

In this context, eminent journalist, S.S. Agrawal in his publication has quoted, "Public Interest is the basic principle underlying the whole philosophy of Press. He said, it is unethical on the part of the editor to hold back information which gives an insight into the functioning of the Government. Citing the Bofors issue decade ago, Agrawal said how Chitra Subramanyam of Indian Express and N. Ram of The Hindu were the first two media victims where the Editors did not publish their reports for their convenience, for which both the reporters resigned from the job. To be frank to say, news should carry sacredness and truthfulness, so that the comment would be free. Press Council of India has clearly indicated what should be the moral conduct of media. Council has clarified about distorting and twisting of news, which influence the public mind in a negative way and therefore does not come under moral responsibility of media.

Accuracy, pre-verification and caution against defamatory writings and refrain from deliberately twisting the report are the essential parts of ethical journalism.

Lastly, media is the mirror of Democracy. The tender plant of Democracy flourishes only in an atmosphere where there is a free interchange of views and ideas. It has not only a moral rights but a moral duty. Prabhu Chawla, the Eminent Journalist has said that media should act upon for the greater interest of the nation like farmers and soldiers. Moral duty and responsibility never count the personal interest. Thus coordination between thought and expression should be based on truthfulness, transparency, objectivity and public accountability, which are the ethics of media.

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## Ethics and Media

*Salini Mahapatra*

The word 'Media' carries a lot of weight and is perceived differently by people of different walks at different times. In layman's term, media are all those entities that offer information, education and entertainment for various purposes. As a fourth pillar of Democracy, media have been playing an important role for the protection of law and justice. Though it is devoid of any powers to punish the law-breakers, it is considered as one of the most important instruments for safeguarding social justice in a democracy like India.

"Let noble thoughts come to us from every side" is the eternal message of the Rig Veda given several millenia ago signifying the freedom of expression.

Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India guarantees to the citizen, the right to "Freedom of speech and expression." The media purvey public opinion and shape it. Parliamentary democracy can flourish only under the watchful eyes of media.

At a time when the globalisation of Indian economy has brought about drastic change in the media scape and the Indian Press is also going global, the responsibility of press is to safeguard the interest of the people and the Nation has increased manifold. While playing the role of informer, the media also take shape of a motivator and a leader. All pervasive and all powerful is media's impact on society. With so much strength and power, the media can't lose sight of its privileges, duties and obligations.

Media is mandated to follow certain ethics in collecting and disseminating the information viz., ensuring authenticity of the news, use of restrained and socially acceptable language for ensuring objectivity and fairness in reporting and keeping in mind, its cascading effect on the society and on the individuals and institutions concerned.

As Albert Schweitzer, German Noble Peace Prize winning mission doctor and theologian had remarked "The first step in the evolution of ethic is a sense of solidarity with other human beings."

Ethics is a code of values that govern our lives, and are thus very essential for moral and healthy life. In context of the press, "Ethics" may be described as a set of moral principles and values, which guide the conduct of journalism. The ethics are essentially self restraint to be practised by the journalists voluntarily, to preserve and promote the trust of the people and to maintain their own credibility and not betray the faith and confidence of the people.

The media all over the world have accepted that code of ethics should cover at least the following areas of conduct; i.e. honesty and fairness, duty to provide an opportunity to reply to critical opinions as well as to critical factual reportage, appearance as well as reality of objectivity, respect for privacy, duty to distinguish between facts and opinion, duty not to use dishonest means to obtain information, duty not to endanger people and the duty not to prejudge

the guilt of an accused and to publish the dismissal of charges against or acquittal of any one about whom the paper previously had reported that charges had been filed or that a trial had commenced.

The freedom of press has to be preserved and protected not only from outside interference but equally from those within. These measures not only ensure the accountability of media and act as a brake on the arbitrary and unabridged use of power but also help to enhance the credibility of press. These ethics are not in the nature of control on the press but are necessary for fair and objective use of the press for maintaining freedom of speech and expression in true spirit. It is to be appreciated that our legislation very wisely did not entrust on the council the task of 'laying down' a code of

conduct. For ethics cannot be mined down a strait packet. These broad principles are flexible, general principles, the range, the reach and terrain of which are wider than those of law.

To conclude, best are the words of Mahatma Gandhi, an eminent journalist, "the sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper press is a great power; but just as unchained torrent of water submerges the whole country side and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within."

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## Media and Development

*Punam Seth*

Media is the path through which development is possible. Media is the voice of public. It is playing a vital role in daily life. It is impossible to develop the society without the involvement of Media. It provides so many things to the public. It is an instrument through which helpless gets its right. The dirty corruption behind the people comes to the lime light only through Media. Media not only provide the information but also encourage the people to raise their voice against injustice, to fight against corruption. Generally people are thinking that if their children watch any programme, serial or movie in television they will go to the wrong path but this concept is wrong because at the end of every programme there must be a lesson. In fact it not only teaches lesson but also gives message to the audience/viewers/readers that be alert, be aware, because reality is more dangerous than this programme. Media is the key to development. Through media we are getting all

information which is directly or indirectly encourage the society to put step towards development. The bond between Media and development is inseparable. In fact it will not wrong if I say Media is the key that fits the lock of any development. Media is the eye of the society. Day or night media is keeping eye on society. Any development without media is impossible. My words are insufficient to write about the advantages of Media. Media is like a tree. Like tree every branches of media, every root, every leaf, every fruit are serving the public. While rendering its valuable service towards society the media should be impartial and it should be courageous enough to bring out the truth without any sort of influence from any corner.

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